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Rural Freight Transportation Conference, Sept. 8

Plan now to attend the Eighth Annual Freight and Logistics Symposium

The Eighth Annual Freight and Logistics Symposium will be held on December 3, 2004, at the Four Points Sheraton in Minneapolis. The theme for this year's symposium will be the forces of change in the trucking industry.

On the riverfront: Weighing the future of a barge shipping facility

The Minneapolis Upper Harbor, located on the Mississippi River near downtown Minneapolis, occupies an increasingly valuable slice of riverfront real estate. The potential of the property to be converted to alternative uses has fueled an ongoing debate over its future. With sponsorship from the [Minnesota Department of Transportation](#), University of Minnesota professor **Jerry Fruin** and graduate student **J. Keith Fortowsky** of the [Department of Applied Economics](#) analyzed the complex transportation issues involved in repurposing the facility, especially impacts on the road network.

The Upper Harbor offered Fruin, whose research often focuses on transportation-related issues, a good window into local/regional freight movements. Because it is the only harbor beyond the last set of locks on the Mississippi River, tracking freight volumes is relatively simple. Also, the small number of facilities at the Upper Harbor made intensive interviews with operators possible.

To the researchers, a key consideration in closing the Upper Harbor would be the fate of freight traffic that currently moves by barge into and out of the area. Rather than simply disappearing with the loss of barge access, the researchers expect the freight to be mode-shifted to truck transport. The increase in the number of heavy trucks moving through the central Twin Cities must be taken into account when calculating the impacts of closing the Upper Harbor.

The issue of modal shifts highlights the complex relationships between different segments of the Twin Cities' transportation system. Many of these relationships were examined in the recently completed [Transportation and Regional Growth Study](#), managed by CTS. Reports from that study covering related topics include *The Full Cost of Transportation in the Twin Cities Region* (2000) and *The Distribution of Transportation Costs in the Twin Cities Region* (2003).

Visit *Modal Shifts from the Mississippi River and Duluth/Superior to Land Transportation* (Mn/DOT 2004-28) at www.research.dot.state.mn.us/detail.asp?productID=1923.

Editor's note: reprinted from the CTS Research E-News, July 2004

FMCSA safety permit program and Mn/DOT's commercial vehicle forms online

The [Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration \(FMCSA\)](#) has established a new national safety permit program for motor carriers who transport certain hazardous materials, including specified quantities of radioactive substances, explosives, toxic by inhalation materials, and methane. The program requires motor carriers to obtain a federal safety permit the next time they renew their biennial update (filing the MCS-150) after January 1, 2005, in order to transport hazardous materials. See the FMCSA's [Hazardous Materials Safety Web site](#) for details and answers to frequently asked questions. Also, [Mn/DOT's Office of Freight & Commercial Vehicle Operations](#) maintains an online [forms and applications](#) Web page for commercial vehicles.

FHWA Freight Management Operations Web site redesign

The Federal Highway Administration has redesigned its Freight Management Operations Web site, and now offers current news, information by state, and by topic. Among the information available by state:

- Freight profiles and maps
- *Commodity Flow Survey*
- *Vehicle Inventory and Use Survey*
- *Trucking Fast Facts*
- Vehicle size and weight enforcement efforts
- Other state transportation information and contacts

See www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/freight/index.cfm for full details.

Next FHWA 'Talking Freight' seminar

The next "Talking Freight" seminar from the [Federal Highway Administration \(FHWA\)](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov) will be about freight security issues, and will be held on September 15, 2004. Topics will be the effects of the 2002 Trade Act and its effects on freight mobility, FHWA's efforts to secure the transportation system, and their impacts on trade routes. Visit www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/freight/resources/current_news/news.cfm?ID=18 for more information.

Rural Freight Transportation Conference, Sept. 8

The Rural Freight Transportation Conference: Creating Rural Freight Transport Opportunities in a Global Market will be held September 8, 2004, at the Minneapolis Airport Marriott in Bloomington, Minnesota. The conference will highlight economic, planning, and policy issues associated with promoting effective and efficient multimodal export alternatives for rural economies. See www.ugpti.org/signup/index.php for more information.



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